The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants. Oct 13th 1976

My dear Kate,

At last I have got for you a copy of the Scottish Genealogy Society's survey of the gr ave stones at Wiston, and I am sending it herewith. There are two minor mistakes which I have pointed out to the Society: Item 49. The name on the stone is actually Agness (spelt thus) not Ann. Item 131. "Greece" should read "Quebec." It is very difficult to read on the stone. Incidentally, item 49 refers to Mrs Boomhour's ancestors. The graves at Wiston are in good condition. We have lately had some of the inscriptions recut.

I am glad you found Marion Gillespie's diary interesting. I am not sure what the name of Alexander Gillespie's firm was but I think Moffatt was the senior partner. Why it failed I cannot imagine. My father, George Gillespie, was born in Quebec, so I suppose my Aunt Sophy was too. She was the oldest of the family. Long ago I tried to get a copy of my father's birth certificate, but the Quebec authorities were so unhelpful that I finally gave it up. I have since heard that no vital statistics were kept in Quebec in those days. I thought that if any of my grandsons wanted to emigrate to Canada it would help them get in if they could prove that their grandfather and great grandfather were born in Canada.

How strange it was your cousin Christopher Robert Gillespie meeting Alastair like that. You may have another relation in the Canadian House of Commons in Ottawa after the next election and that will be David Anderson. He was a member before but resigned to lead the Liberal party in B.C. That does not seem to have been a success. And now to get back to Ottawa. This is the connection:

George Gillespie – m. – Florence Hebden
b 1849
John Hebden — Alexander – m.- Helen Todd
b 1879 b 1880
Sheila– m.-Dr Anderson
David Anderson

So he is my great-nephew. What relation he is to you you will have to work out.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Gillespie

George - son of Alexander
b 1819
d 1863

Alexander - son of George Gillespie who married Helen Hamilton
brother of George Hamilton Gillespie who married Eliz. Agnes Gillespie

The Old House
Milford-on-Sea
Lymington
? Jan 15

Dear Kate

I promised to tell you about the destruction of the Gillespie papers by Hugh Gillespie. First you must know Bruce Gillespie is the great grand-son of James Gillespie of Parkhall, the eldest of the seven brothers. He is, therefore, the head of the family. Hugh, who died on June 3rd 1960 is also descended from James of Parkhall, but not quite in a straight line. Somehow or other, I do not know how, Hugh acquired all the Gillespie papers, including those of Biggar Park. In a letter to Daisy, Janet's mother, he told her he proposed to leave all the papers to Bruce, the head of the family. He also said that Bruce did not seem at all interested. Daisy sent all his letters to me, and I enclose a copy of one of them. Hugh died on the 3rd June 1960. The next thing that happened was that a man called Hugh MacMillan wrote to the Scottish Genealogical Society in Edinburgh and said he was writing a book on the early fur-trading in Canada, and he would like very much to see George Gillespie's diaries. Did the Society know where they were? The society of course knew nothing about them, so they wrote to me. It was then that I remembered Hugh's letters to Daisy and I got in touch with Mr MacMillan who worked in the Canadian Archives in Ottawa. The next thing was to find Bruce and I eventually ran him down in Toronto, but Bruce said that when Hugh died he had received a number of small items Hugh had left him but he never received the papers because they could not be found. Hugh had lived in Kent near Tonbridge Wells. I eventuallygot in touch with Hugh's solicitors. They informed me that Hugh's widow was still living in Hugh's old home and so I wrote to her. I asked her if she was absolutely certain that the house hadbeen really properly searched for the papers and I asked her to make sure that the papers were not in the vault of Hugh's bank. She looked for the papers, or pretended to, but finally I wrote and I told her my own theory was Hugh, who attached great importance to the fact that Bruce was head of the family, and that Bruce had never shown the slightest interest in the papers, so Hugh had destroyed them himself. I am sure that is what happened. Hugh's widow never replied to my letter. In my opinion she had known all along what had happened, and her search for the papers was all pretense.

Hugh MacMillan talked of coming over here to look for the Diary but I told him it would be a waste of time and money. I do not know whether his book was ever published.

That is the sad story of the loss of the Gillespie papers.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Gillespie

In one letter Hugh said he had enough Gillespie papers to fill a suitcase.

I have got some more Pearson information for Jane and Barbara to work on.

The Old House
Milford-On-Sea
Lymington
Hampshire
SO4 OQL
Tel. Milford-on-sea 2081

Jan 15th 1978

Dear Miss Gillespie

Janet Spicer has suggested that I write to you: She tells me you saw my notice in "Country Life". I was surprised to hear that anyone so far afield reads "Country Life." I found the portrait of Jean Menzies I was enquiring about. At least, I think I have. I knew some people called Errington, who live near Penicuik in Scotland, had a lot of the Gillespie portraits so I sent Miss Errington a copy of the "Country Life" with my notice in it. Sure enought she said she thought they had it, but their house is sold and everything packed away so she could not be sure. But she had the wrong name for (one) person. She thought is was "Divine" Service who married John Gillespie of Gateside. But it is not. Incidentally, we call the lady Jean Menzies on our Family Chart, but her tomb stone at Wiston clearly gives her name as Jane. I expect Jane is right. "Divine" Service, as far as I know, was never painted. What her real Christian name was I do not know. I do not know either where she was buried. It was not at Wiston.

My notice in "Country Life" also brought me in touch with a second cousin Mrs Story whose Grandmother was Helen Jane Gillespie a sister of my grandfather, Alexander Gillespie of Biggar Park. Mrs Story lives in Devon and I have asked my married doughter who also lives in Devon, to call on her.

With kindest regards

Yours sincerely

Ronal Gillespie

The Old House
Milford-on-Sea
Lymington
Hants

Feb 8th 1978 *? Princeton

My dear Kate

I have been tremendously pleased to have two letters from you. You have told me so much that I find it difficult to take it all in. I never met Uncle Bill though I often heard of him. I think my daughter Heather met him. She was a Wren in the 2nd war and was stationed most of the time in Washington, and the Wrens were taken on some sort of round trip including Philadelphia,* and I think she met him there. I have not heard from Jean Story for a long time. I am rather afraid she has been ill. I have asked Heather to call on her but she has not done it yet. Heather is very busy. I think she gives 4 lessons a week to girls and two to grown ups. She teaches them advanced sewing, embroidery and upholstery. Formerly, she had only one class for grown ups but when she got back after the Christmas holidays she found so many women wanted to join she had to make two classes. The people who lived at Beeslack were the Erringtons but the old people, Major Errington and his wife, are both dead now. There is a boy who has just retired from the Civil Service and there are two unmarried daughters. I think there was a third but where she is I do not know. Beeslack is sold and Errington has bought a home in Argyllshire. In the meantime the girls are living in Beeslack stables. The Erringtons were related to the Cowans and Mrs Errington was a cousin of Grace Topham's. My Uncle Tom, you call him Cousin Tom, used to call Grace Topham "Julia Graball". I do not know where the name comes from, a fictitious character in some book I think. Anyhow, Grace Topham grabbed all the Gillespie portraits at Bitteswell and when she died they mostly went to Mrs Errington. I knew they had a lot of them so I sent the copy of "Country Life" to Miss Errington and, sure enough she told me she thought they had the portrait of Jane Menzies but she thought it was "Divine" Service. I notice you think the Menzies girl was Jane and not Jean. I think you are right. In fact if she signed herself Jane you must be right. She is Jean on our family chart but Jane on her tombstone in Wiston Churchyard. I think the tombstone would be correct, but I have asked a girl who works in the Court of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh if she can find out for me. Octavia, daughter of Jean Menzies, married Pearson, and it was Pearson who produced the portfolios of Gillespie portraits. I have a copy of the Portfolios. It contains 22 portraits but I know the whereabouts of only 4 of them or 5 if you count Jane Menzies. I have have Thomas of Jamaica. Mrs Hopkinson, the Granddaughter of Sir Robert Gillespie of Springhill has Robert and his wife Ann Kerr, and my cousin Mrs Pilkingron has Helen Hamilton (Mrs George Gillespie). I did not know about the portraits your Uncle Bill has done. Yes the Cowans for a long time had New Hall, a house near Penicuik. I think it was only rented. I stayed there several times. My Uncle Jack Cowan has some very good shooting in the Pentland Hills.

Have you ever heard of Hugh Gillespie? He was the Grandson of James Gillespie of Parkhall. He has a great many Gillespie letters and papers which in his will he had left to his cousin Bruce Gillespie. But Bruce never showed any interest in them and like an ass Hugh destroyed the lot. I got in touch with Hugh's widow and she pretended to look for the papers but could not find them. I told her I was afraid Hugh had destroyed them but she did not answer. Bruce now lives in Toronto. Have you ever met my nephew Alastair Gillespie? He also lives in Toronto but is mostly in Ottawa. He is in Trudeau's cabinet.

Have you got a copy of the Gillespie Family Chart? I had it brought more or less up to date a year or two ago but person who did it for me made a very bad mistake. How he did it I cannot imagine because I gave him an old chart to copy. I have sent it to Edinburgh now to be done again. When it is done I shall have it photographed.

I hope you can read my writing. My hand is geting pretty shaky. I shall be 88 in April if I make it!

Yours

Ronald

Thoe Old House
Milford-on-Sea
Lymington
Hants March 10th 1978

My dear Kate

Thank you for your very nice letter of March 5th. I have been hoping to give you the latest news of Mrs Story but I have not heard from her for a long time. I am rather afraid she may have been ill. I have asked my daughter, Mrs Pearn, who also lives in Devon, to call on her but, so far, she has not been able to do it. My daughter is very busy. She gives lessons in advanced sewing to various classes. I think she has 4 classes for girls per week and 2 for grown ups. Every now and again she does a refresher course herself. In a previous letter you mentioned a Miss Johnston who lived at Moffat. I had never heard of her. I wonder what has happened to the Gillespie things she had. If I was not so old I would go up to Moffat and search about, but I have given up driving my own car now so it is not too easy to get about. I do not know, either, who the young Gillespie, in the scarlet coat, who was killed in the mutiny, was. The only Gillespie I know of who was killed in India was the Irish one, General Sir Robert Rolls, and he was killed long before the mutiny. You, no doubt, know Henry Newbolt's poem to him. I was very much interested in Alexander Gillespie's diary. I have a small piece of the diary of his wife, nee Marion Paterson. They were married the day after Christmas 1843, and then slowly found their way to Biggar Park. They were pretty gay there and one night sat down 22 to dinner. In April they went to Canada crossing the Atlantic by paddle steamer. They visited Montreal and Toronto but finally settled in Quebec. I am not quite sure what Alexander Gillespie did there. The head of his firm seems to have been a man called Moffatt. It was agreed that Alexander would stay 3 years in Canada. Alexander died pretty young. That was mainly why they had not enough money to keep Biggar Park. Bey Gillespie, Janet's uncle, always used to say he would buy Biggar Park back again. I am sure he would have done so too. Biggar Park came on the market again only about a year ago.

Did you know that besides Alastair Gillespie you have another relation in Ontario. She is Mrs WH Boomhour. It seems an unlikely name for a Gillespie, so I give you a sketch of her relationship.

Thomas Gillespie m. Mary Lindsay
1683-1753
|
James 1721-1794 m.Agnes Campbell (spelled Agness on her gravestone)
of Bodinglee /
John - 1826 m Catherine Hope
Robert 1803-1873 m. Alice Parker
Robert Andrew m. Annie Rice
1853-1935 |
Mildred m. WH Boomhour

I think Mrs Boomhour has three daughters. She had a brother but he died as a boy.

You asked me if I know what other portraits the Erringtons have. No, I do not know but I do know that they have quite a lot. Sad to relate Beeslack has been sold and two Errington girls are living in what was the stables. I understand the Errington boy, or man I should say, has just retired from the Civil Service and has bought a house in Argylle. But it may be some time before they move. In the meantime everything, including the portraits, is packed up. They know I would like to buy any of the portraits if they would sell any of them, but I do not suppose they will. I note that Jane and Barbara are trying to sort out the Patersons. I have an engraving of the portrait of General Paterson. I beleive Alistair has the original. Someone gave it to him when he was at Oxford. He was a Rhodes scholar there after the 2nd war. I did not know Jean Creighton. But I knew a young Gillespie from Winnipeg. I was a prinsoner-of-war in the 1st war and young Gillespie was an air-man. He was shot down and was in the same camp that I was for a time. I have not heard of him since then.

I m having the Gillespie family chart revised. I had it done about 3 years ago but the main who did it made a glaring mistake and I am having it altered. If you like I will send you a photograph of it when it when it is finished. A Girl who works in the office of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh is doing it for me. I should say

The Old House
Milford-on-Sea
Lymington
Hants March 14 1978

Dear Kate

I wrote to you only the other day, but there seems to be so much to write to you about.

You say Jane and Barbara are thinking of sorting out the Patersons. Jane and Barbara must be nieces of yours, are they?

In any case they will have undertaken a very useful, and difficult, job in sorting out the Patersons. According to our family chart Gillespie men married Paterson women no less than 7 times and Paterson men married Gillespie women twice. The first Paterson on our chart is Isobel who married James Gillespie. Their joint grave is at Wiston, but I suppose the most important of all the Patersons was Grizzell who married Alexander Gillespie. She was the 3rd daughter of James Paterson of Glentaggart. I do not know where Glentaggart was or whether it still exists. I expect it was a farm somewhere. Long ago I tried at the College of Arms in London and the Lord Lyon King of Arms in Edinburgh to find out if any Patersons to which we were connected had registered arms. But I failed to find any.

I beleive that Dorothy Wordsworth, the poet's wife, in a book she wrote mentions Grizzell Gillespie. The book was called "A Tour of Scotland" and was published in 1803. I have never seen it. You said you did not know about Bruce Gillespie and Hugh his cousin. It is a long, sad story and I do not think anyone knows it all but myself. I will try to write it to you sometime.

I have a part of the diary of Marion Paterson. I will try to get it typed out and send it to you. It is all about their time in Canada. I have a girl in the village who does typing for me on the few occasions that I want something typed. She will never take any money, so I pay her with apples and cabbages out of the garden!

I expect you are tired of the snow. We had a heavy fall here this year, the first for about 10 years. It has all gone now but it has been very cold and wet. I have had a tremendous lot of crocuses and snow drops. They have been really wonderful. Now the daffodils are just beginning.

To revert to the Patersons, General Paterson, father of Marion, was a Paterson of Plewsland. Plewsland was in Ayrshire but, I think no longer exists.

Yours sincerely

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-Sea
Lymington
Hants May 15th 1978

Dear Kate

Thank you for your letter of May 7th. I was very much interested to hear that Mrs. Boomhour had written to you. I have never met her, but I think she must be a very nice person. She was over here last summer for the Gathering of the Clans or something, and wrote to me from Dumfrieshire. But I could not get up to Scotland. I have given up driving and getting about is not easy. I have still not received back the Family chart. I wrote to the girl in Edinburgh not long ago and reminded her that I was in my 89th year and I told her that if the chart did not come soon I would not be here to receive it. She apologized for the delay so I suppose it will come soon. She is having it photographed. Do not worry about the cost. I have arranged all that.

You asked who lived at Luttesworth. It was Robert William Gillespie. He added Stainton to his name when he married Josephine, daughter of Joseph Stainton. Bitteswell Hall was the name of the house.

The Scottish Genealogy Society have been making surveys of some of the Scottish Churchyards and recently made one of Wiston. I have some copies of that. Would you like me to send you one? It is quite interesting. My uncle Tom lived in Gloucestershire. He had a paper mill there, but one night in a storm the high chimney blew down. Luckily, no one was hurt, but he could not afford to put it up again, so he joined his brother-in-law Charlie Chalmers who had 2 paper mills mills near Linlithgow. They did very well. My uncle Tom rented Longnoble from Charlie Chalmers and later rented Avonside House a very nice place. I stayed with them at both places.

I was tremendously interested to hear that Barbara Bradshaw and Jane Edwards are compiling a volume around your grandmother's letters. That will be most interesting.

The letter I sent you from Hugh to Daisy has a copy. I have the original so do not bother to return the copy. Margaret and "Daisy" were one and the same person. Stewart Spicer did not like his wife being called "Daisy". It was not grand enough for him. So, even I, who had known Daisy since she was about 10 years old, was supposed to call her Margaret. But do not say anything about that to Janet

Yours

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants Aug 13th 1978

Dear Kate

I thought you might be interested in this bit of Diary of Mrs Alexander Gillespie, neé Marion Paterson as it is mainly written in Canada. She was, of course, my grandmother.

I have noly got this small bit of her diary, whether she wrote any more and, if so, what happened to it I do not know.

I copied it all out in longhand first and then got a girl to type it out. The original is not easy to read because the writing is rather old fashioned, although very neat, and the ink much faded. However I made it all out except for a few names. I thought the girl might be able to make them out but I do not know if she tried.

I hope all goes well with you.

I did not think Trudeau's behaviour towards the Queen was any too good.

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants Sept 14th 1978

Dear Kate,

Thank you for your very interesting letter of Sept 3rd. How strange it was that your cousin Christopher Robert Gillespie and Alastair should meet. I hope you will meet Alastair one day. How long does it take you to get to Ottawa? You might meet him there one day and stick him for lunch. I was horrified to find when I went to get a copy of the survey of Wiston Churchyard that I had already given all that I had, including my own, away. I only had 4 copies and I gave one to Mrs Boomhour, whose ancestors lie at Wiston, one to my brother in Victoria B.C., one to Mr Hope of Gillespie and Paterson w.s. Gillespie MacAndrew w.s. looks after the small sum we have for the upkeep of the graves. And one to my daughter Mrs Pearn. However, I have written to Edinburgh and asked for more. If I get them I will send you one at once.

I appointed myself to keep an eye on the graves at Wiston because I think I am the only Lanarkshire Gillespie left over here now. Like the Flowers of the Forest they have all withered away. Bey and Tom were killed in the first war and my son was killed in the 2nd. Bey's name was really Alexander Douglas. Why he was always called Bey I do not think anyone ever knew. He was a great friend of mine.

I am glad you had such a nice summer. Are Bob and Joan Pearson any relation to Pearson who married Octavia Gillespie?daughter of Jane Menzies? He used to have a prep school somewhere in Scotland north of the Forth. His son was at Loretto with me for a little time. We have had a very cold summer over here. But it has been a good fruit year. I have got a great number of apples, more than ever before I think. I am giving them away as fast as I can. On Wednesday, Sept 27th I am making my annual trip to London. I go up to the Imperial Chemical Industries Pensioners lunch. I hire a car and do it comfortably. Generally I take some one up with me but no one seems to want to come this year. You are lucky to be able to drive your own car. I gave up driving several years ago, but I was 88 last birthday and getting pretty doddery!

With kind regards

Ronal Gillespie

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants. Nov.12th 1978

Dear Kityy

Thank you for your very interesting letter of Oct. 31st. Thank you also for my Father's letter to cousin Bill which I found most interesting. I am afraid my Father got very worked up about the war. I am glad you found the survey of Wiston Churchyard interesting. I have been nagging at Elizabeth Chenevix Trench for a long time to visit Wiston and at last she has done it. She writes that she found the Churchyard in very good order and the inscriptions on the stones easy to read. I have recently had them re-cut. You would not have known about Gwen and Daisy and John's name being on the War Memorial because I had them put on.

In Scotland they keep Churchyards much better than they do in England. I think in Scotland the upkeep comes out of the rates. Some are well-kept such as Milford but some are very untidy. Some put sheep in cemeteries to keep the grass down.

You ask about Thomas Paterson Gillespie, my uncle. He first had a paper mill in Gloucester but one night the tall chimney fell down. Luckily no one was hurt, but after that he joined his brother-in -law Charles Chalmers who had two paper mills near Linlithgow. He rented a house called Longcroft from his brother-in-law but later rented Muiravonside House from people called Sterling. Muiravonside was a lovely house. I often stayed with them there. Bey was about 6 months older than I and Daisy about a year younger. At Muiravonside we had a good tennis court, a curling rink, very good green houses and quite good shooting. T.P.G. was very keen on shooting and fishing and Bey and I were pretty good shots. After the boys were killed T.P.G. gave up Muiravonside. He lived in Edinburgh for a time and then went to England. He first took a home called Goldenfields near Liphook in Hampshire. I think that would be before you saw them. Later he took a house not far from here called Efford Cottage. That was where he eventually died. When the boys were alive he used to take a shooting every year in Scotland. I went with them to Caithness and to Orkney.

Charles Chalmers, his brother-in-law had one daughter. She was just a tiny tot when I knew her but that was over 70 years ago. I think she is still alive and living somewhere in Scotland. She is Mrs Cameron now and very well off.

I was interested to hear that you had been to Hamilton. My mother's father was Rector of the Church of the Ascension in Hamilton. He was just about to retire and return to England, when he died. There is a very nice window in his memory in the church.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Gillespie

Nov 26th 1978
The Old House
Milford-on-sea

Dear Kate

I have received from Barbara and Jane a very carefully compiled book of Gillespie letters. They are extremely interesting and require a lot of study, which I have not yet had time to give them. I notice there is quite a lot about Octavia Gillespie who married Pearson and died of T.B. in Madeira. I spent 1/2 a day in Madeira once on my way to or from China. But I did not know then that Octavia had died there or I should have tried to find her grave. I notice Beeslack is mentioned too. I wrote to Miss Errington there some time ago, but never had an answer. I think they must have left. I told you the place had been sold. I thought you might be interested to read this letter I have had from Elizabeth Chenovix-Trench about Wiston. I chivvied her for about 4 years to go there and at last she has been. James is my youngest grandson. Lucy Chenovix-Trench is the daughter of Tony Chenevix-Trench's cousin. Tony is Headmaster of Fetters in Edinburgh. He formerly was Headmaster of Eton but did not like it and left and then got Fetters. At Eton his time was taken up with Administration while he really likes to teach. Also I do not think he got on with the Provost, Lord Caceca. It seems to me that the duties of the Provost and of the Headmaster overlapped.

Jo is Josephine their daughter, who recently married. Please thank Barbara and Jane for the book.

Yours

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants Nov 28th 1978

Dear Kate

I have received an intensely interesting book of Gillespie letters. But the letters accompanying them is also very interesting. Can you tell me something about Jane Edwards who signs herself Jessie Newell Gillespie'e first daughter, and also the other girl who does not sign herself at all but whom Jane Edwards describes as her room-mate Barbara Bradshaw? Barbara Bradshaw has a remarkable knowledge of the Gillespies but I hope you can tell me exactly who she is.

I have lately got out an up to date Family Tree. I am afraid it refers mainly to my side of the family, but I have had it photographed and would be glad to send you a copy if you would like one.

I hope you are going to have a nice Christmas. We are going to be pretty full up here. Heather Pearn, who is my married daughter, her husband Major Pearn Royal Marines (retired) and their 4 boys are all going to be here. They boys are all grown now. The youngest, James, has lately joined Christies, the Art Auctioneer.

Yours

Ronald Gillespie

Dec. 1st 1978
The Old House
Milford-on-sea

Dear Kate

Would you be so kind as to pass this letter on to Jane Edwards and Barbara. I do not really know what Barbara's name is. Also, I am doubtful about their address. Where is Webster Groves and what does MO stand for?

The Gillespie letters they sent me are intensely interesting, but require a lot of study. I note that the wife of Alexander Gillespie of Sunnyside is always referredto as Jean but I think she was christened Jane. She is Jane on the tombstone at Wiston, and I should think that that is the finalword. I am very much interested to note that Alexander Gillespie on his letter of Aug 18th 1835 used his coat-of-arms seal in black wax. About 20 years ago I had great difficulty over our coat of arms. I think it was in the reign of George III that an order was issued to the effect that everyone who claimed coats of arms should register them with the Lord Lyon. A lot of Scots refused to do it. They always hated the Hanoverians anyway and as they had had their coats-of-arms for generations they were not going to register them now just to please "a wee German lairdie". But the result was that they lost their coats of arms. I was pretty sure our arms had never been registered and I took the matter up with the Lord Lyon. After considerable argument I got the arms as we had always had them, but I could not get the crest. Formerly we had a crest a cat rampant but the Lord Lyon would not let me have that. He said it belonged to MacIntosh of MacIntosh, chief of Clan Chattan, and in the end I had to be content with a miserable litle half cat! Anyway I got the arms properly registered. Besides our family there are two other Gillespies, Americans, father and son, I think who have registered arms. Their arms are very like ours. I do not know who designed our arms. The main thing about them is a ship with sails furled and flags flying. They also include what is known as "a pelican in its piety". That is a pelican feeding its young with its own blood.

It is a very strange thing that our arms were not registered before. George Gillespie of Biggar Park used them and his son John, who was a w.s.[writer to the signet] must have known they had to be registered. Anyhow, the matter is settled now.

I hope you have a good Christmas. I am going to have 4 hungry grandsons here.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Gillespie

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Hants Feb 18th 1979

Dear Kate

Thank you for your letter of Feb 11th. How quickly it has come. I wrote to Barbara not very long ago sending her the pedigree of Helen Hamilton. I hope my letter reached her. I had to guess at the stamps required because I could not get to the Post Office. It is not far from here but down a steep hill and the roads were so icy I was frightened of falling.

I got someone in Scotland to trace Helen Hamilton's pedigree for me. I was hoping to find that she was related to the Dukes of Hamilton, but she was not!

Yes, the next excitement will be Phyllida Spicer's wedding. I have not met her fiancée. He was to have come here on Christmas Eve but, in the end, did not. I forget why. Phyllida is a nice girl. I expect one of my daughters will drive me over to the wedding. Salt Mill House is about 1 1/2 hours drive from here. They were trying to persude me to go when they were here at Christmas Eve and as a challenge said that Sir Adrian Boult was going! He is about the same age as I am, but he has not been so heavily involved in 3 wars as I have! As I expect you know, Meg Spicer's mother was married to a man called Stewart Wilson. He ran off with someone else's wife so she divorced him and married Adrian Boult. We have had a miserable winter - a lot of ice and snow and very cold. You seem to be ahead of us. There are only 2 or 3 snowdrops out in the garden and the daffodils just beginning to poke through. I have not done any work in the garden for months and my old gardener had not done much.

Yes, the strikes have been very bad. We have been lucky here, though, and not felt it very much. The Socialists have destroyed this country. Callaghen is a most revolting character. With any luck he will be flung out at the next electi Election. I think Margaret Thatcher would be quite good.

I am glad the Family Tree arrived safely. The expects call it a "chart". You may have noticed that they put a ribbon round the cat's neck. I suppose some girl in the office of the Lord Lyon did it. Itis really quite wrong, because the cat is supposed to be a cat-o-mountain, i.e. a wildcat. The wild cat is a most ferocious animal. It is nearly extinct now. I have only seen 2 in my life. Both in captivity somewhere in the north of Scotland but I would hate to have to put a ribbon round one of their nects. However, it does not really matter. Not many people know what a cat-o-mountain is. And, in any case, there are much more ridiculous things in heraldry that that. Such as Lions holding swords or daggers. One family has a camel munching clover and another a wolf with some stalks of oats in its mouth.

Yours

Ronald Gillespie

I hope you can read this. My writing seems to be getting rarher shaky!

The Old House
Milford-On-sea
Lymington
Hampshire
SO4 0QL

March 25th 1979

Dear Kate

Thank you for your letter of March 18th. I am deeply distressed, though, to hear of Barbara's illness. It is terribly hard luck. I do not know her, of course, but I was very much impressed by her knowledge of the Gillespie Family and by her production of the Gillespie letters. I do hope she will be all right soon. Please keep me informed.

I have told Phyllida I will get to the wedding if I possibly can but I have reminded her that in a few days I shall be 89 and I am getting pretty doddery. All the Pearn family, except the eldest boy Peter, will be here the night before the wedding so we will go along more or less in a body. Peter, the eldest boy, is in Ireland and will not be able to get back for the wedding. He rang up me a few minutes ago and seemed in good form. He is in Londonderry. The boys are staying on to a dance after the wedding, but Heather, her husband and myself will be returning here. Itis only about a two hour drive to Salt Mill House but the church is a little further.

When Barbara gets well will you ask her to do me a sketch of all the Canadian relations. I get a bit muddled as to how they all fit in.

It keeps very cold here. We have had a bad winter and spring altogether. But I have millions of snowdrops out and a great many crocuses. The daffodils will not be very long now.

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hampshire
SO41 0QL

May 1st 1979

Dear Kate

I have been very much worried about Barbara. Is she better now? It seems extraordinary that she should go down as she did.

The Spicer's wedding went off very successfully. It was held in a very beautiful church about 4 miles beyond Salt Mill House. I managed to get there, complete with morning coat and top hat. Adrian Boult got to the Church, but not to reception, so I suppose I was the oldest person there. My daughter and son-in-law and I left as soon as the bride had gones but the 3 boys stayed on and danced and did not get home until about 2 am. There were about 12 bridesmaids dressed in green. One of them told me she disliked the dress so much she would never wear it again. But, actually, they looked quite nice. As you well know we have a general election here on May 3. I hope the Tories win but as Wellington would have said it is going to be a damned close thing.. I was surprised and am worried to hear Peter Spicer say he was going to vote Tory this time. He usually votes Labour or occasionally Liberal. Janet, of course, too has strong Labour inclinations but I do not know what she is doing this time. You will be having an around the same time I understand. Allastair is standing again. Personally, in spite of Alastair, I would like to see Trudeau flung out.

It keeps very cold here but the daffodils are very nice. I have about a million in the garden. But I cannot do anything in the garden myself now. However, I am lucky in having a very good gardener. He is nearly as old as I am but he is really on a pretty good . He comes and goes as he likes and I pay him by the hour. Please give my love to Barbara

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hampshire May 12th 1979

My dear Kate,

I am rather worried about Barbara. Is she any better? Do you think it would do her and Jane any good to come over here? They could stay here. I live with my second daughter Diana. She is not terribly social, but she would help. My married daughter Heather, who lives in Devon, would, I am sure, do everything she could. I expect cost might be a difficulty but I might be able to help there. I have some dollars in The Bank of Montreal in Victoria BC. Some of it is on fiscal deposit and I cannot write a cheque on it, but some is free. I have written to the manager of the Bank there to see how much I have available. In any case I have some £ over here I could use. If they are going to come that had better come soon because I am already 89 and very shaky! At last it is warming up. I have just been round the garden with a woman who comes every Saturday to pick daffodils. She has an old mother who is, more or less, bedridden. I have millions of daffodils but they are already beginning to wilt.

Jane and Barbara could go to Scotland. I am sure Elizabeth would put them up. But Tony Chenevix-Trench is retiring at the end of this term so tthings might be in a mess there

You asked once if I had seen the Biggar Park china. Yes, I remember Daisy had some. When Biggar Park was sold my father was left a lot of the silver. But some idiot sent it out to B.C. round the Horn in a sailing ship. Of course the ship sank taking all the silver with it.

I expect Janet could arrange for Jane and Barbara to stay in London.

You will have seen that we have got rid of that poison person Callaghan. I hope you will do the same for Trudeau.

Yours

Ronald Gillespie

[KMG] June 11

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Hants.
May 28th 1979

Dear Kate,

Thank you for your very interestinf letterof May 18th. I am so very glad that Barbara is better. I hope she will continue to make good progress. I assume that there is no suggestion of her coming over here?

I was not sorry that Trudeau was defeated, but I wonder if Clark is up to the job. He will have a hard time in Quebec I am afraid.

Of course I was delighted that Callaghan was flung out on his ear. I have always loathed the man

I think Mrs Thatcher will be very good. But she, too, will have a hard time. My two young grandsons, who live in London, went to the Carlton Club on Election Night. They took two girls with them, and I had given them the money for Champagne. They were there until 5 a.m. dancing and having a drink whenever a favourable result was announced!

I got David into the Carlton Club some time ago. You have to be a dyed in the wool Tory to get there.

We are having a very cold summer. I worked in the garden yesterday, but today it is so cold I will not get further than the post-box.

There is a temendous lot of apple blossom again this year. I really hope we do not have as many apples as we had last year. We had so many I could not cope with them all. The daffodils are over now. When the leaves have died down I will get my gardener busy with his scythe. I cannot compete with the weeds now.

Heather (my daughter) and her husband had Phyllida and her new husband staying with them one night in Devon. They liked him very much. They were on their way to Cornwall where he was to play in a cricket match.

Yours

Ronald

[KMG] June 11

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants May 31st 1979

Dear Kate

Thank you for your letter of May 23rd, receivedthis morning. I am very glad to hear that Barbara is making good progress. If, at any time, she and Jane decide to come over here I can produce the necessary cash.

Your letter gave me the lst news I have had of Alastair's defeat. I have not heard from B.C. yet but I expect young Anderson was defeated too. I have been told told, though it may not be true, that Alastair's father votes Conservative, in spite of Allastair being a Liberal. I am sure I would vote Conservative too.

I have been rather puzzled by your expression "The Island". At first I thought you meant this country but evidently not. What is the "Island"?

Tell Jane I will keep going as long as I can, but at 89 I am pretty shaky.

Heather, my elder daughter, and Tony her husband are coming again this week-end. James, my youngest grandson is also coming from London. I expect David is coming too but I have not heard yet. The boys like to come mainly I think because they get some square meals. However, luckily they both get good lunches supplied by their firms.

Your green house sounds very nice. I am very slack about mine but I grow some seeds in it. The best thing in it though is the grape vine which does very well. It is a "black Hamburg" and gives us lots of fruit.

I have just had a terrible fall. The telephone rang and in my hurry to get to it I fell. I got up with great difficulty and Diana's help.

If Jane and Barbara aver want something to do they might try to find the connection between the Scottish and Irish Gillespies, if there is one. My uncle Thomas Paterson Gillespie tried once but the Colsel(?) Gillespie in Ireland with whom he was corresponding died.

I knew a Captain Rollo Gillespie and his wife in Hongkong once. They were very very nice, and luckily were transferred before the crash came. Afterwards they got a divorce, goodness knows why, and I lost touch with them. They are both dead now.

Long ago a curious thing happened to me. I was fighting Bolsheviks in Siberia for Kolshak (?) when I met an old lady Miss Gillespie who with her sister Princess Gargarina and the princess's small granddaughter were fleeing from the Bolsheviks. They eventually got safely home to Ireland through Vladivostok. In the end I lost touch with them when I went back to China. The old people must be dead long ago but the little girl might still be alive. I have often thought of trying to find her but it would be difficut and she would probably think I was going to leave her a fortune which I cannot do.

Yours

Ronald

[KMG] answered July 31

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hampshire June 23rd 1979

Dear Kate

Thank you for your very interesting letter of June 11th. I was tremendously pleased to hear that Barbara is much better. She must go slowly now and take it easy.

I was, however, very much upset to hear that you, yourself had been ill. You must take it easy and let Jane do all the work. I have had 3 falls myself in the garden. I do not seem able to balance very well. I am fairly tall and when I fall I fall like Lucifer. Twice the gardener has been within call and has helpd me up, but once I had no one to help me. I eventually managed to crawl to a sort of stone bench we have in the garden and pull myself up on that. I was most upset to hear on the wireless this morning that Tony Chenevix had died. I knew him well and liked him very much. He was a prisoner of the Japs in Singapore and has never been really well since then. He was Headmaster of Eton for a time but did not like it very much. He liked teaching and there was too much administrative work at Eton. Also I do not think he got on very well with Lord Caccia the Provost. It seemed to me that their work overlapped too much. Anyhow Tony left and got the Headmastership of Fetters in Edinburgh. He was a good scholar. It was said that when he was a prisoner he amused himself by translating the Japanese orders into Greek. Tony, of course, married Elizabeth, Daisy's eldest daughter. Their own daughter was married in Edinburgh this year. I could not get up to Edinburgh for the wedding but I saw Tony at Phyllida Spicer's wedding. Now I have been asked to yet a third wedding. This time it is Judith Lane, the granddaughter of Laura Maconochie. Laura was the youngest daughter of my aunt Sophy who married Jack Cowan. Laura was a lovely person and a great friend of mine. She married Robbie Maconochie and he was eventually knighted. She had 3 daughters and one son. One of the daughters married Lane and it is his daughter that is being married. The wedding is at Clifton near Bristol, in the college chapel. The chapel is lovely and the organ beautiful. An older sister was married there some years ago and I went to the wedding. Lane was the Senior House-Master at Clifton. I think he hoped to get the Head Mastership but has missed it. I heard from my brother Errol, Alastair's father, he was disappointed Alastair lost his seat. He said young Anderson was not elected either. I do not think he has much use for young Anderson. He seemed to think Clark would have a lot of trouble with that Quebec man Levasque, I think his name is.

Thank you for telling me all about "The Island". It sounds absolutely lovely.

I hope you can read all this. As I getolder my writing gets worse.

Yours

Ronald

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hampshire Aug 9th 1979

Dear Kate

I was very pleased to receive your interesting letter of July 31st. I am so glad you are better, and that Barbara, too, is doing well. It is terribly hard luck that she should have been struck down like that. With me, I am all right but have had to give up doing any work in the garden. I fall over so easily, and when I fall I cannot get up again. The other day I was walking quietly along a path when I stopped to pull up two or three weeds. I pulled up one or two and then fell flat on my face. Luckily the gardener was still about and with Diana's help they got me up, but it is no joke really. We have had some very fierce storms, and I see this morning that a large branch has been torn off one of my apple trees.

I was much interested to hear that you had met Alastair and his wife. It is a long time since I have seen him. He came over here sometimes when he was in Trudeau's cabinet and rang me up from London, but he never came down here.

David, Heather's 3rd boy, was here last week-end. He is buying a flat in London, for which I am giving him .

How is Mr Clark doing as Prime Minister? I never hear anything about him over here. I think Mrs Thatcher is doing quite well, but she has a hard job. It is sad that the English have degenerated so much. Nobody works and nobody seems to care.

Peter, my eldest grandson, is getting a few days' leave and going across to Lagabater, hoping to shoot a grouse. I suppose you do not know about Lagabater. It is a grouse-moor of about 8000 acres in Wighton and
It belongs to Old Mr Boult who was very keen on shooting and fishing, but Adrian Boult, his son, did not care in the least for either. So when the old man died he left the place to his daughter who ran sheep on it and was very keen about it. But when Meg Spicer's(Peter's wife) mother married Adrian Boult Miss Boult gave the place to Peter. Peter had never shot a grouse in his life and did not know one end of a gun from the other. They never would have gone there at all but Daisy and I stirred them up. I often went there alone and shot with the keeper.

When Barbara is able, could she draw me a sketch genealogical table showing all the relatives in your part of the world. I get a bit muddled up as to how they all fit in.

I have just accepted an invitiation to go to lunch in London, the I.C.I. Pensioners lunch. If I manage it it will be my last visit to London. I am past 89 and it is too old to go gadding about London!

Yours sincerely

Ronald Gillespie

Oct 28th 1979

My dear Kate

It is a long time since I wrote to you. Since then I have made two expeditions, one to London to the I.C.I. Pensioners lunch and one to the Eton Chapel for Tony Trench's memorial service. The first was the I.C.I. Pensioners lunch. But I did not really enjoy it much because almost all the men I knew on the China Coast and in Malaya have gone now. If I live to next September, which is highly improbable, I do not think I shall go again. I enclose a photograph which may amuse you. The Old Man in the light suit and with 2 sticks is I!

Tony Chenevix-Trench's memorial service was very interesting and impressive. Elizabeth was there, of course, and all the Spicer Family. Tony's younger son read one of the lessons. The older boy had left and is studying to be a doctor somewhere. In London I took two ladies and my two grand-sons to tea at the Carlton Club. I get a woman who drives a car for hire to drive me whenever necessary, which is not often. Diana came with me to Eton.

I have managed to plant a few bulbs, daffodils and crocuses mostly, but I really do nothing in the garden now. I fall down so easily and then I cannot get up!

I hope Barbara continues to make good progress.

How is Clark, the new Prime Minister, doing? We hear nothing about him here. Mrs Thatcher continues to do well. I think we shall have 10 years of Tory rule.

Ronald

Doug Gardiner and Clem Koder.

Sir Maurice and the Octagenarians.

Nov 22nd 1979

Dear Kate

Thank you for your very interesting letter of Nov 8th, and for the photographs. They were absolutely absorbing. How nice you all look.

You ask about Elizabeth. No, she will not stay in Edinburgh. In fact, she is already in a house they had bought in Norfolk. I do not think she likes it much and I expect she will sell it and go further South or West. I told Tony at the time that Norfolk was very nice but pretty cold. We took a house there once when we were home on leave from China. Elizabeth never got to Biggar Park, but she had had a letter from Mrs Barnes, I think it was, who had promised to show her the house.

I hope to see Elizabeth at Christmas time. I have asked Meg Spicer to bring all the Salt Mill House party over here on Christmas Eve and I think Elizabeth will be there. I have warned Meg that they will get nothing to eat but curry!

I think they will be a large party and we shall be 8. My dining table will only seat about 8 so everyone has to sit where best they can.

I see in this morning's paper that Trudeau has resigned as leader of the Liberal Party in Canada. I wonder who will take it on. I should think Alastair might have got it had he been a member.

The story of the diamond rings is very interesting. But, I think it rather a pity that they broke up the snuff box.

I am very glad that Barbara is improving. It is a most extraordinary thing that she should have been struck down like that. She looks so strong in her photographs.

I have had only one fall lately. I was raking up some leaves on the paths when, suddenly, bang I went down. Luckily Diana happened to look out of the window, and came to my help. But, it is getting cold now and I do not go out very much. I am one of those crazy people who collect stamps, British Empire, not the crazy Commonwealth. I have 9 volumes so they keep me busy. I had some interesting stamps which the Japs looted from me in Hongkong, but I have been lucky in buying two collections since.

I am afraid my Christmas card was a bit early this year, I think. I meant to send it surface mail but it seems to have gone by air. I was much interested to hear that you have nuthatches in Eastern Canada. I do not think we had them in the West. They are not common here but I have seen them in the garden. I belong to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and always get my Christmas cards from them.

Jolly good luck for 1980. If I reach April I shall be 90!

Yours

Ronald

Jan 1st 1980

My dear Kate

Thank you for your very nice card, or perhaps I should sayletter. What a very handsome bird the Cardinal is. We did not have them in B.C. Mrs Boomhour sent me a card with one too.

I was interested to hear of Peter Spicer's letter to Helen Alexander. We had the whole of Salt Mill House party here to lunch on Christmas Eve, 17 of them. There were 7 of us and a few odd people who came to drinks and stayed on to lunch so we were quite a big party. However, we had a very good curry which Heather had made in Devon and brought up, together with the mince pies! Elizabeth was here, and both her sons and daughters. I am afraid she does not much like her house in Norfolk, but it is not easy to make a change. She never got to Biggar Park. One of the girls married in Edinburgh about June. She was here with her husband, in fact all the Chenevix-Trenchs were here, 2 boys and 2 girls. I told Meg Spicer that I should like to have the same party next year, but, as I shall be 90 in April there is not much hope!

Who is Helen Alexander? I suppose you know Peter Spicer is really "Sir" Peter, but he will not use his title. The Title, I think dates from the Marconi(?) scandles. The Spicer of those days got Lloyd George out of a mess and got a knighthood for his trouble. Peter's father, Stewart, Daisy's husband, became the 4th baronet when his brother died. He jumped at the title. Of course, most of the Spicers have a touch of socialism about them.

My party has all dispersed now. Heather and Tony back to Devon, John to Barnstable also in Devon, and 2 boys to London. David is going up to Leister soon. He is a barrister and is some one there. He has had a bit of difficulty in getting started. He worked in the legal departments of two firms in London. One gave him nothing to do and in the other he had a very unpleasant man immediately over him. I think he will be all right now.

Peter is getting home from Germany about March I think. He had had a long spell there and will be glad to get away. Of course, war with Russia may start at any moment.

I wonder what will happen in your election in March. I suspect the Liberals will get back. I have not heard anything about Alastair but I suppose he is running again.

I was pleased to hear that you had had a letter from Mildred Boomhour.

Good luck in 1980

The Old House
Milford-on-sea
Lymington
Hants Jan 10th 1980

Dear Kate

I thought you might be interested to see this letter from Elizabeth Spicer. I am afraid she is having a pretty difficult time. I told Tony long ago that Norfolk is a very cold county, but he would go there. I expect her family will look after her. She has 2 girls (1 married) and two boys. One boy is working to be a doctor. The other has just left Eton. I do not know what he proposes to do.

What do you think will happen at the next election on Feb 14th? I suppose Alastair will stand again, though I have not heard. I see Trudeau is assuming the leadership again.

I hope all goes well with you.

I am very shaky!

Yours

Ronald

I do not want Elizabeth's letter back.

The Old House,
Milford-on-Sea,
Lymington, Hampshire.

31st October 1980.

Dear Miss Gillespie,

I had no sooner written to you than I had your letter, and I congratulate you on your 80th Birthday; I was very much interested to hear Barbara and Jane may be coming over here next summer. Of course they will come here if I am still alive, which is not very likely, but Heather would be pleased to see them in Devon, and James has a flat in London, it really belongs to Peter who is not often there, and in any case I think they could all fit in at a squash.

Yours sincerely,

Ronald.

Dear Cousin Kate.

My father has asked me to write to you. He does not feel up to writing to you at the moment but he was very pleased to get your letter and to hear all your news.

Unfortunately Daddy had a fall about a month ago - in the middle of the night. My sister couldn't get him up so she rang the Police and they send a couple of burly bobbies who got him back to bed. Daddy didn't break anything but he was somewhat shaken and his self-confidence took a blow. He is getting better again but it has aged him quite a bit. He doesn't walk much now - usually goes in a wheel chair or goes around the garden in a batri-car.

My eldest son has just got engaged. He is to be married in Lincoln Cathedral on Sept 19th. Sadly there is little hope of Daddy being able to make it. Peter is a major in the Army and unfortunately he has just had a draft dict to Northern Ireland which is rather worrying. However it won't be for too long as he is going to the Staff College at Camberley in October.

We haven't had a bad winter here this year - hardly any snow at all but lots of rain. Daddy's garden always looks particularly lovely in the spring masses of crocuses and snowdrops - and now the daffodils are out. There are a great many different varieties there.

It is a long time since I was in Canada. I was in the W.R.N.S. in New York during the war and was sent to do my basic training with the Canadian Wrens in Galt, Ontario. It had been a reformatory and I remember we had bars on our windows! I always regret not going over to Hamilton while I was there, to visit the Church of the Ascension where my great-grandfather Canon John

By air mail Air letter
Par avion Aerogramme

answered April 5th.

Miss Kate Gillespie
1576 Richmond St.
London
Ontario
N6G 2M6
CANADA

Sender's name and address

Mrs H.D. Pearn
Gosford House
Ottery St. Mary
Devon-
England Postcode EX11 1LX

An air letter should not contain any enclosure

Hebden was the first rector.

I am sorry Jane and Barbara decided against a visit over here but if they ever change their minds we would be glad to give them a bed - Wish I could come over & see you both I— afraid it is unlikely! I hear you have some of the Bagot Park china - It must have been an enormous set.

Daddy sends his love and hopes you are keeping well. He always enjoys receiving your letters and hearing your news— Life is rather lonely at nearly 91. With best wishes— Yours Heather Pearn—

Ottery St. Mary 2824

Gosford House,
Ottery St. Mary,
East Devon.
EX11 1LX

Nov. 14th 1981

Dear Cousin Kate,

My best wishes to you for a happy Christmas and New Year.

I was glad to hear news of you from Sheila Miles and she showed me some photos, so it is nice to be able to picture you. I was glad also to hear of your interests — we share the embroidery one. I have asked the Miles over for drinks unsuccessfully twice but intend to try again over Christmas!

My eldest son Peter came back safely from Northern Ireland & got married in Lincoln Cathedral on Sept 19th It was a lovely wedding — Carol Spicer came & we had a chat about you — My second son John is now engaged and gets married on Dec 19th. So, as far as we are concerned it has been an eventful

year.

My third son David went out to B.C. this summer. He had a wonderful holiday & was so pleased to meet my Uncle Errol and all the rest of the Gillespie cousins — On his return he found he had been promoted so altogether life has been enjoyable for him lately. My father would have been very pleased.

He would also have been very interested in a trip my youngest son made to Russia & Siberia this summer. My father went out to Siberia as part of the British effort to help against the Reds, after World War I.

I enclose two newspaper cuttings. I also have one about my father which I have mislaid — I hope I turns up before I have to post this! — (It did!) Happy Christmas. Heather

Gosford House
Ottery St Mary
Devon. EX 11 1LX

March 7. 1984.

Dear Cousin Kate

Thank you for your kind letter of condolence on the death of our beloved son, Peter — He was a much loved husband, son and brother and his loss has been a devastating blow.

I am glad my father did not live to hear of this tragedy - He had such a very sad life himself - at least he was spared this - He was always very proud of his grandsons, justifiably so —

We had such a happy holiday with Peter and Rachel last summer in Osnabrück. Peter showed us his training grounds and I remember him saying "It is tricky to get our big tanks over these narrow bridges." How prophetic his words proved to be.

We were so proud of Peter — He was at the Staff College last year and obviously had a promising career in front of him — He was going to go out to Alberta, about now, to train with his squadron. He had already been there twice before.

The Regiment gave him a very fine funeral here in Ottery - He was buried with full military honours — pall bearers, and firing party and trumpeters. I was astounded at the assurances his friends came — the church full & so many flowers — One of his sergeants was in tears as he lowered Peter's coffin into his grave and another told the Colonel afterwards "he had never had to do a worse thing".

Two weeks later we went out to Osnabrück to a Memorial Service in the Garrison Church — A memorable service with a 20 strong band playing & the colours paraded and a full congregation —

It is all very sad for Rachel - She had a miscarriage a month before Peter was killed — Peter had a flat in London - fortunately on an insurance Type mortgage so it is hers without any mortgage - She has got a job as P.A. to the Director of a computer firm & says it is going well and she finds it interesting — She puts a brave face on it all and is determined to get on

We are going tomorrow evening to have drinks with Janet – She now lives about 15 miles from here – It will be v. nice to see her again. Her sister Peggy & husband John Heap are to be there too – Neither of them came to Peter's funeral but Meg Spicer & Elizabeth Chenevix-Trench kindly did. Virtually my only relations in this country.

I haven't seen the Miles' lately – We asked them to drinks several times but they could never come – so gave up! Their house is now on the market. I hear they intend to move nearer Exeter too as to be nearer the schools –

My three remaining sons have been very kind and considerate since Peter died – They all clubbed together to give us a coloured TV for Christmas – John's little daughter Lucy Jane is now 7 months old and is very sweet – They live in North Devon so we see them fairly often – I am glad Peter saw his niece once before he was killed –

I had a letter of condolence from Alastair Gillespie and when I replied, I suggested he might like to organise something to help maintain the Gillespie graves at Wiston – There have been collections in previous years but really more is needed – Josephine Hoptinson – (a descendant of Robert Gillespie of Springhill) – visited the graves recently & said they needed some work particularly the old ones c.1700 – I know Alastair has written to the lawyer in Edinburgh who administers the graves, so I hope something will get started – I feel, that, when Alastair's book is published there will be added interest in the family –

Thank you for writing and for your sympathy. It has been a help to think that others share a

TANK SQUAD MAJOR DIES IN EXERCISE

by
Jon Slattery

AN ARMY major — married just two years ago in Lincoln Cathedral — has been tragically killed while leading his men in a training exercise in Germany.

Major Peter Pearn (35), who had seen active service in Northern Ireland and Oman, was killed on a night exercise in Northern Germany while leading a squadron of tanks.

In September 1981 Major Pearn, who served with the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, was married to Rachel Walter (25), in Lincoln Cathedral.

Mrs. Pearn flew back to Britain and is now staying with her husband's family in Ottery St. Mary, Devon.

Her father-in-law, retired Major Tony Pearn, said today: "Rachel has taken the tragedy very well. She arrived back in Britain last night. She is being very brave but is devastated by the news."

Brother

Major Pearn added: "What has happened is one of the hazards of a military career. Peter died in the service of his country.

"The family are very shocked and it is a tragic irony that having seen active service in Oman and two occasions in Northern Ireland he should be killed in a training exercise."

Mrs. Pearn is the daughter of the late John Walter, of John H. Walter and Sons, auctioneers and estate agents in Lincoln.

Horseman

Her brother, Mr. Ian Walter, said today: "From what we have been told, Major Pearn was killed after a tank fell from a bridge during a night exercise."

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence confirmed today that Major Pearn was killed in an accident while taking part in exercise "Eternal Triangle".

A post mortem examination has yet to be carried out.

Major Pearn was a keen horseman and was well known as a point-to-point rider in his home West Country.

He and his wife had no children.

■ A wedding picture of Major Pearn and wife Rachel.

grandson
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proved to be.
We were so proud
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front of him — He
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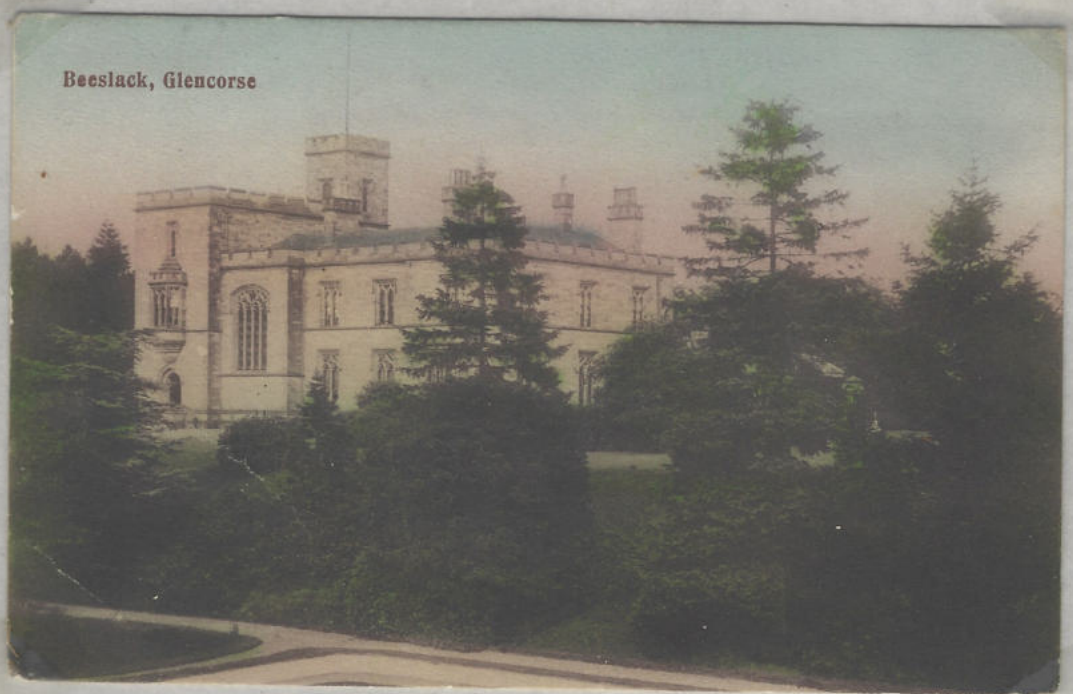
to the Director of a computer firm & says
going well and she finds it interesting — She puts a
and is determined to get on

Garden at Beeslack 1902



Salt Mill House
Fishbourne
Chichester.

Christmas 1924.

Salt Mill House, Fishbourne, Chichester.